

*Unity Sunday School Lessons, No. XX.*

# A Six Years' Course of Study

*Arranged for the Uniform Topic or Graded System.*

**NUMBER ONE.**



**I. General Outline:** { A STUDY OF RELIGION.  
A STUDY OF DUTIES: THE GROWTH  
OF CHARACTER.

**II. Beginnings:**—THE LEGEND AND THE TRUE STORY.



AT YEAR'S WORK IN FIRST COURSE.



WESTERN UNITARIAN S. S. SOCIETY,  
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## CONTENTS.

### GENERAL OUTLINE.

Introductory, . . . . .	3
A Study of Religion. Six Years' Outline, . . . . .	8
A Study of Duties: The Growth of Character. Six Years' Outline, . . . . .	10

### BEGINNINGS: THE LEGEND AND THE TRUE STORY.

Preface, . . . . .	11
Authorities and Helps, . . . . .	13

Introductory . . . . .	15
How the Earth was made, . . . . .	15
How the Floods came, . . . . .	16
How Man was made, . . . . .	17
Man's First Home, . . . . .	17
How Tools grew, . . . . .	17
How Communities grew, . . . . .	18
How Language grew, . . . . .	18
How Sin began, . . . . .	19
How Laws began, . . . . .	20
What am I? . . . . .	20
Man's search for God: Polytheism, . . . . .	21
Man's Search for God: Monotheism, . . . . .	21
The First Prayer, . . . . .	22
The First Heaven, . . . . .	22
The First Priest, . . . . .	22
The First Temple, . . . . .	23
How Books began: The First Bible, . . . . .	23

## INTRODUCTORY.

This course of Lessons was planned by a committee appointed at the Second Annual Institute of the Western Unitarian Sunday School Society, held in St. Louis, October, 1888. The committee reported upon the course to the Third Annual Meeting, held in Davenport, October, 1889. After careful discussion it was referred back to the committee with instructions to print.

The course is planned upon the theory that six years of coherent, consecutive work, aiming at a definite outline of the fundamental things which every child should know, concerning the religious history of the race and his own moral obligations and spiritual needs, will yield better results than many more years of unsystematic and disjointed effort. It is believed that a unified course, with a definite limit of time, will add to the interest of the child and dignify the Sunday-school in the minds of the parents. It is hoped it will provoke more careful preparation and higher aim on the part of the teachers. Probably six years is more than the average attendance of pupils upon the Sunday-school, and the completion of such a course as is here proposed will make post-graduate classes in normal work and advanced studies all the more sure.



This course, it is hoped, is available for either the Uniform Topic or Graded System of instruction. Its use may be symbolized, in the first case, by a wheel, around which the whole school travels together, the teachers adapting the lesson to the varying comprehension of the pupils; in the second case, by a flight of stairs, whereon new classes follow the earlier up the successive steps. In the former case the *order* of studies will have to be sacrificed except to those who begin with the first year as arranged; pupils entering during the course will take up the study at whatever point the school may be, as is now done by those who pursue the Chautauqua courses of study. The committee would also suggest that the best way of reaching the Graded plan, and in many schools the only way, is to start the whole school in a One-Topic way on some such course as this, thus training teachers to take charge of the separate grades, and detailing one or more for that service as the primary scholars or new comers reach the successive years.

The age at which pupils can begin this six years' course will be largely determined by the skill and courage of the teachers of the primary classes. It is the theory of a part of the committee that it is possible to begin quite early, when proper pains is taken to select the most graphic and salient points; but practically it will probably be found that, while little ones have a place in the Sunday-school at five years of age or earlier, this course will not be available until they

are nine or ten years old. For the guidance of teachers during these primary years therefore, suggestions for a course for primary classes are to be published in connection with this schedule.

The six years' work is divided into two distinct courses given below, each one continuous and progressive to the end, and each one claiming a definite part of each year:—

I. A STUDY OF RELIGION—reaching each year from the first of September to about the first of March, including twenty-two lessons, and closing each year with reviews and suitable exercises.

II. A STUDY OF DUTIES: THE GROWTH OF CHARACTER—this extending each year from the first of March to the end of June, giving fourteen or fifteen lessons to the course.

The above arrangement leaves the four Festival Sundays—Easter, Flower, Harvest and Christmas,—an introductory Sunday, and two Sundays for review or final exercises.

This plan involves:—

1. The printing of the general schedule in two forms—that in which it is here presented, and also on a card large enough to be posted on the walls of the school-room, in the living-room at home, and in the pupil's room.

2. The publication of two little guide-books each year, one for each course; these to contain a brief introduction, a carefully prepared list of books of ref-

erence, a list of topics, and a very few questions or suggestions under each topic. These last are necessarily brief and purposely left inadequate, so as to require individual study and personal application on the part of the teacher. These little books are to be veritable *guide*-books, leading to more ample, not to more meager helps than the ordinary Sunday-school text-book or lesson-leaf. They aim to put within easy reach of the teacher good authorities on the subjects handled. The twelve little books, when completed, will form a valuable guide and reading-list to the student of religion and character, without as well as within, the Sunday-school.

3. The teachers' meeting, led by the pastor, unless a more suitable leader be found in the parish. The subjects should be studied in their broader, as well as their simpler, bearings. It is safe to assume that if the teachers are sufficiently informed upon the subject, they can select that which will be best suited to the age and intelligence of their pupils. Attendance upon this teachers' meeting should be an imperative condition of teaching. Without such help few teachers are competent to lead a class through this, or any comprehensive, course of study. If competent, there would still be sacrificed, by non-attendance, the unitary interests and the co-operative spirit of the school.

4. It is suggested that pupils, having honestly completed these two courses of study, be "graduated" with appropriate recognition ; perhaps by a joint ser-



vice of Church and Sunday-school, pains being taken to acquaint them with the fact that they are now ready for the deeper studies and higher duties of the Church. This graduating class would be, in many cases, transformed into the minister's Confirmation Class, which would lead them to become active members of the Church. From study to work would seem a fitting rounding-out of the scheme.

5. Lastly, this plan involves courage. It is an experiment that will bring with it new plans and open fresh ways. To those teachers who really seek to revitalize Sunday-school teaching, it will give patience, energy and skill to carry it through. To save it from the danger of too much externality, and interest in remote times, places and individuals, merely as such, the spiritual significance of every fact should be diligently sought and steadily kept in mind. The devotional and singing exercises of the school should be made to minister more and more to the religious nature of the child. If with the study of religion on its thought and history sides, and the study of duties in their practical and character-building applications, there can be carried on a parallel development of the reverential and worshiping side of the child's nature, by means of the hymns, readings and prayers of the Sunday-school, the hope of the committee will be realized.

## I.

## A STUDY OF RELIGION.

*Six Years' Work: September to March.**First half of*

See page 5.

## FIRST YEAR:

## BEGINNINGS: THE LEGEND AND THE TRUE STORY.

An attempt to study, by comparison and contrast, the earlier myths and legends with the later discoveries and inferences of science and philosophy. The problems of creation, the origin and early growth of society, of morals, of religious ideas and customs, will be studied. (See detailed outline, page 15.)

*First half of*

## SECOND YEAR:

## THE RELIGIONS OF THE OLDER WORLD.

A glimpse of the sacred places, names and beliefs outside of our own inheritance. A bird's-eye view of the world's piety, as a necessary preparation for an intelligent appreciation of our own religion. To come into sympathy with those far-removed faiths will help to correct the narrowness and prejudices of traditional Christianity, and to lay sure foundations for a faith in the universal brotherhood of man, and the universal fatherhood of God.

*First half of*

## THIRD YEAR:

## THE GROWTH OF THE HEBREW RELIGION.

An analytical and topical study of the Old Testament, aiming especially to discover the ethical nobility of the prophets, the devoutness of the psalms, and the unfolding thought of God.

*first half of*  
FOURTH YEAR :

## THE FLOWERING OF THE HEBREW RELIGION.

New Testament: Jesus and Paul. Partly chronological, but mostly analytical: e. g. Jesus and the poor; Jesus and the rich,—the sinners,—the sick; his beatitudes; his parables, etc. Paul, the man; his work; his letters, etc.

*first half of*  
FIFTH YEAR

## THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

The Greek Church. The Roman Catholic Church. Protestantism. The heroes of the Church, its martyrs and apostles: e. g., Athanasius; Augustine; St. Bernard; St. Francis; Loyola; Luther; Calvin; Fox, Wesley, Bunyan, Roger Williams, etc.

*not half of*  
SIXTH YEAR :

## THE FLOWERING OF CHRISTIANITY.

Showing the rise and growth of the Liberal Christian movement, and its tendency toward a universal religion. Its *martyrs*: Arius; Wyckliffe; Savonarola; Bruno; Servetus, the Socini; Its *leaders*: Voltaire, Paine; Priestley; Channing; Ballou; Parker; Emerson, and the modern leaders of thought. Closing with a study of existing Unitarian organizations: the American Unitarian Association; the National Unitarian Conference; the Western Unitarian Conference; the State Conference; and the Home Church.

# A STUDY OF DUTIES: THE GROWTH OF CHARACTER.

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*Six Years' Work: March to July. Subject to Revision.  
See page 5.*

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## FIRST YEAR.

HOME LIFE.

## SECOND YEAR.

SCHOOL LIFE.

## THIRD YEAR.

CORNER-STONES OF CHARACTER.

## FOURTH YEAR.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF MANHOOD AND  
WOMANHOOD.

## FIFTH YEAR.

PUBLIC SPIRIT: NEIGHBOR AND  
CITIZEN.

## SIXTH YEAR.

THE HIGHER LIFE.

## A STUDY OF RELIGION.

*First Year.*

BEGINNINGS: THE LEGEND AND THE TRUE STORY.

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PREFACE.

This year's work aims to give to the pupil a clear conception of the difference between the testimony of science and history, on the one hand, and the earlier fancies of the race, on the other hand, concerning the origin of the world and the beginnings of society morals and religion.

The first great trouble will be the securing of the necessary books of reference. They should be consulted by the leader, be within reach of the teacher, and, if possible, placed within the Sunday-school or teachers' library. To compensate for this trouble comes the satisfaction and stimulus of teaching, not from meager and sometimes second-rate manuals, but from the standard authorities in these various departments of thought. After the books are secured, the trouble will be an embarrassment of riches; it will be the perplexity of selection. Let the Legend precede and lie over against the probable Fact. Note, as far as possible, parallel legends and the similarity of early fancies of differing nations. Note also the double service of these early legends; first believed as fact, as the *science* of the elder day, now they are materials



for our poetry, whence their value still. Note, again, the material for still higher poetry in the conclusions of science concerning the same matters. The way will open for the studious teacher to find something of interest for every class.

The topics below are arranged for twenty-two Sundays. Some will prefer to omit a portion of the topics in order to give more time to the study of the rest. Others may decide to continue this study for a longer period. The committee hopes that, where variations are made, the former plan will be pursued, because the method of study and the principles it is desirable to bring out can be established by the study of a few topics as well as more, and it is believed that there is a real advantage in having the time-limit and a definite course.

One who has had much practice as Sunday-school teacher and superintendent, writes: "After a year's experience in trying to teach a school how the Hebrew Religion grew, without the pupil or teacher being well grounded in the nature of myth and legend and the process of their development, I am ready to emphasize the particular value of this course."

The accompanying schedules are not "Lessons," not even Outlines of Lessons, but indications of where and how to find lessons. A faithful attempt to work on this line may convert the necessity of being satisfied with these meager helps, into a virtue, inasmuch as it will necessitate broader study, and stronger work, on the part of the teacher; it may show that for Sunday-Schools, as for Unity Clubs, Religious Study Classes, and other similar lines of class-work, the *single book* help is giving way to the use of wider references and the topical method of study.

## AUTHORITIES AND HELPS.

SIMPLE MANUALS: — Clodd's "Childhood of the World," (the best little manual for the whole course); also Clodd's "Childhood of Religions." For the Bible Creation Legends, — Bartram's "Stories from Genesis," and Mrs. Sunderland's "Stories from Genesis." For Evolution as shown by Science, — Simmons' "More Wonderful Genesis," in No. XI., Unity Sunday School Lessons, or the larger form of the same, "The Unending Genesis;" Crosskey's "Methods of Creation," published by the London Sunday School Society. "The Bible for Learners" will give much help all along the way.

FOR THE BIBLE GENESIS STORIES: Among books larger than these manuals, Lenormant's "Beginnings of History," a comparison between the Hebrew and similar legends, Hedge's "Primeval World of Hebrew Traditions," Newton's "Book of the Beginnings," Baring-Gould's "Legends of the Patriarchs and Prophets."

FOR EVOLUTION: Bergen's "Development Theory", Clodd's "Story of Creation," Powell's "Our Heredity from God," Fiske's "Destiny of Man" and "Cosmic Philosophy," the Brooklyn "Evolution Essays," Darwin's, Wallace's, Lyell's, and Herbert Spencer's Works.

FOR MYTHOLOGY AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF MAN: The best books are by Tylor, his "Primitive Culture," "Anthropology" and "Early History of Man," Lubbock's "Origin of Civilization," Keary's "Dawn of History," Peschel's "Races of Man," Wilson's "Anthropology," Geiger's "Development of the Human Race," in the Philosophical Library, published by Houghton and Mifflin, Fiske's "Myths and Myth-Makers," Cox' "Aryan Mythology," Lang's

"Custom and Myth," Bulfinch's "Age of Fable," Baring-Gould's "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages."

The articles in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* on the various topics involved are written in the modern spirit and by competent hands. If access is had to this work, the teachers' meeting can be well conducted, even though no other authorities be within reach.

Many of the above mentioned works and kindred books are published in the Humboldt Library at the low price of 15 cents a part. A very good Teachers' Library can be made up for this course out of these publications.

## PLAN OF STUDY.

TWENTY-TWO LESSONS.

**I. INTRODUCTORY.**

- (a) What is a Myth?  
 What is a Legend?  
 How do they rise and grow?  
 Give illustrations. Santa Claus, William Tell, the Dog Gelert, Pocahontas, Washington's hatchet; "The Robin" in Whittier's Poems; "The Cross-bill" in Longfellow's Poems.
- (b) What is Science? What is History?  
 How do they differ from Myth and Legend?  
 How does knowledge grow?  
 Does the race have a childhood like the individual?  
 What becomes of the old Myths and Legends?

*See the Introduction to Strauss' "Life of Jesus," concerning origin of Myths; also Clodd's "Childhood of the World," and Baring-Gould's "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages."*

**II, III. HOW THE EARTH WAS MADE. (Two Sundays' Work.)**

- (a) What is the Creation legend in Genesis I?  
 What grand truths, and what great errors, in it?  
 What other Old World stories of Creation can you give?

Where did these stories come from?

How have they been preserved?

What does "Cosmogony" mean?

(b) What is the Nebular Hypothesis?

How came the stars?

Does a stone grow?

In what order did plants and animals appear in the world?

What does "Evolution" mean?

*See Clodd's "Story of Creation," or any of the books on Evolution referred to above. For comment on the Genesis Story, see "Bible for Learners."*

#### IV, V. HOW THE FLOOD CAME. (Two Sundays' Work.)

- In Legends* (a) What is the Genesis story? Gen. VI-IX.  
Can you give other Noah stories? Deucalion and Pyrrha; see Plato's "Timæus" and "Critias."  
*In the story* } Where is Ararat?  
How big was the Ark?  
Can you find or make a picture of it?  
*In the History* (b) What is the Geology story of the work of the waters?  
How are the strata formed?  
What about land-lifts, glaciers, etc?  
What is a fossil?  
How is coal made?  
How many species of animals now known?  
How big should the ark be to hold them all?

*See Lyell's "Geology," and his "Antiquity of Man, as well as books referred to above."*



**VI. HOW MAN WAS MADE.**Legends

- (a) How were Adam and Eve made?  
 Gen. I: 26-31. II: 7, 20-25.  
 How long ago?  
 What great truths in the story?  
 What is the Greek story of Prometheus? Of  
 Deucalion?

History

- (b) What is the Darwin story of man's origin?  
 What is the difference between creation and  
 growth?  
 What is the relation of the tadpole to the  
 frog?  
 Worm, chrysalis and butterfly.  
 Which would you prefer to be,—a fallen  
 angel, or a rising animal?

**VII. MAN'S FIRST HOME.**

- (a) Paradise,—what does it mean?  
 Story of Eden, Gen. II: 8-17.  
 What other stories of a Golden Age behind  
 us?
- (b) The real home of primitive man.  
 The drift-man and cave-man.  
 What were the conditions of the first man  
 found in Europe? How long ago prob-  
 ably?  
 What are the "kitchen-middens"?

*See Keary's "Dawn of History."*

**VIII. HOW TOOLS GREW.**

- (a) Tubal-Cain, the fabled father of artificers.  
 Gen. IV: 22.

Can you find stories of other tool-makers, men of skilled hands, like the canoe-maker in Hiawatha?

- (b) The shell-heap men,—the mound-men,—the lake-dwelling men.  
What is meant by the stone, bronze and iron ages?
- (c) Tool stories found in words e.g. willow, flax, shears.

*For interesting account of man's first mastery and use of fire. see Geiger's "Development of the Human Race," Chapter II.*

#### IX. HOW COMMUNITIES GREW.

- (a) The story of Cain and Abel. Gen. IV: 1-16.  
Was Abel better than Cain before the murder?
- (b) The real order of progress: Hunters, shepherds or herders, farmers, towns.  
First "land-question."  
First "struggle for existence with survival of the fittest."
- (c) The increasing civilization that springs from the town.  
The trader, the craftsman, the artist.  
Jubal and Tubal-Cain. Gen. IV: 20-22.

*See Keary's "Dawn of History," and Bagshots "Physics and Politics," ch. II.*

#### X, XI. HOW LANGUAGE GREW. (Two Sundays' Work.)

- (a) The story of Babel,—the confusion of tongues. Gen. XI: 1-9.

The story of Pentecost,—the harmony of tongues. Acts II: 1-13.

- (b) The modern interpretation of the Babel story.

Was there one language originally?

Families of Language.

Make a chart of the Aryan and Semitic streams.

Words as fossil or condensed history.

The scientific prophecy in the Pentecost story.

Will there be a common language?

What of Volapük?

*See Trench's "Study of Words," Keary's "Dawn of History."*

## XII, XIII. HOW SIN BEGAN. (Two Sundays' Work.)

- (a) The story of the Temptation,—Adam, Eve and the serpent. Gen. III.

Is immorality a higher stage, then, than immorality?

Is labor a curse or a blessing?

"In Adam's fall, we sinned all": results of the belief.

The serpent in symbolism.

- (b) The beginnings of conscience: has a dog conscience?

The savage's idea of right.

Is a sense of duty innate?

Does conscience *grow*?

Does the child have as clear a vision of right as that same child will in adult life?

Is the babe, when born, a white sheet of paper, with no stains; a bramble bush, full of corruption; or a garden-patch sowed with germs of good and evil?

What is the difference between "original sin" and the facts of "heredity"?

Sin as imperfection,—the result of inexperience,—immaturity.

#### XIV. HOW LAWS BEGAN.

- (a) The Tables of Stone given by Moses. Exodus XX.

What other famous codes were ascribed to God?

What were the ancient Oracles?

- (b) Natural origin of laws.

The growth of custom into laws, of laws into codes.

Early laws of person, property and crime, traceable to the patriarchal family system.

The laws of war, before the laws of peace.

*See Bagehot's "Physics and Politics," ch. I and IV; Maine's "Ancient Law," ch. I and V.*

#### XV. WHAT AM I? MAN'S FIRST ANSWERS.

- (a) The primeval ghost-world. Dreams, shadows, etc.

Early thought of spirit as breath.

The savage's interpretation of shadows, echoes, dreams, hiccoughs : the old practice of breathing a prayer after such a spasm, was to drive away the evil spirit that threatens to steal the breath,—the modern "*Gesundheit*" of the Germans.

- (b) The modern thought of spirit as mind.  
 "Man" is "one who thinks."  
 Mind the end of evolution.  
 Does your head think, or do you think with  
 your head?

*See Part I. of Herbert Spencer's "Principles  
 of Sociology."*

#### **XVI. MAN'S SEARCH FOR GOD: POLYTHEISM.**

- (a) Ancestor-worship.  
 Fetishism, Nature-worship: Sun-gods, etc.  
 Hero-worship. First a priest, then a God.  
 Idols: the Golden Calf. Ex. XXXII: 1-14,  
 Apollo Belvedere, etc.
- (b) The truth underneath these gropings.  
 Marvel and power everywhere.  
 Man's searchings for the Soul of things.  
 His need of symbols for the unseen: "idol"  
 means *thing seen*.

#### **XVII. MAN'S SEARCH FOR GOD: MONOTHEISM.**

- (a) The Abraham Stories: see Clodd's "Child-  
 hood of the World," section 34.  
 The King of Kings.  
 The Heaven Throne.
- (b) "There is one God"—"God is one."  
 One Soul of all things.  
 The Fatherhood of God,—the Brotherhood  
 of Man.  
 Unity, Theism.

*"Natural History of Theism" in Hedge's  
 "Ways of the Spirit"; Fiske's "Idea of  
 God."*



**XVIII. THE FIRST PRAYER.**

- (a) Cain's and Abel's offerings. Gen. IV: 1-5.  
Why should Abel's offering be more acceptable than Cain's?  
Abraham's offering. Gen. XXII: 1-19.
- (b) The early sacrifices in all religions.  
What the underlying meaning?  
The demand for human sacrifices.  
Placating angry Gods.  
The terror of early worship.

*For interpretation of these and all other  
Bible Stories see "Bible for Learners."*

**XIX. THE FIRST HEAVEN.**

- (a) Hades, Sheol.  
The "Elysian Fields" of the Greeks.  
The "Valhalla" of the Scandinavians.  
The "Happy Hunting-ground" of the Indian.
- b The origin and growth of the Hell idea  
Gehenna.
- c Endlessness of bliss and woe in its growth  
and eternal progress.

**XX. THE FIRST PRIEST.**

- (a) The early Sooth-sayer.  
The Medicine-man of the savage tribes.
- b The later separation of the bard, the prophet  
and the law-giver, from the priest.
- c The functions of the priest, in earlier and  
later days.  
The priestly cast.

**XXI. THE FIRST TEMPLE.**

- (a) Bethel and Jacob's dream, Gen. XXVIII.  
Ancient shrines, altars and oracles.
- (b) What gave rise to holy places?  
Trace the growth of the temple-idea, and the temple-fact, from the primitive pile of stones, to ancient temple and modern cathedral.  
Study Sarah Flower Adams' hymn "Nearer my God to Thee," as a spiritual interpretation of an ancient story.

**XXII. HOW BOOKS BEGAN: THE FIRST BIBLE.**

- (a) The legend of Cadmus, and other stories of the origin of writing and letters.
- (b) The real beginning of writing.  
Where did our alphabet come from?  
Hieroglyphics.  
The tile libraries of Assyria.  
Papyrus.  
Parchment scrolls.  
The history of book-making hinted in the words, *paper, page, volume, tome, book, library, pen.*
- (c) Note that earlier religions distrusted writings at first. All religious traditions were oral, to be kept alive in the memory of the priests and the faithful.

Higher civilization began with the power of making records,—preserving history. This is comparatively a recent acquirement of the race.

As a rule, the earliest books of the world are its Sacred Books—its Bibles.

---

This brings us to the end of our study of “The Beginnings of Morals and Religion.” It is hoped that we are now prepared to face the next course in the “Study of Religion” intelligently. We shall study next year the Religions of the Older World. We are now just at the door of the great temple of man’s religious experience. Will you join us and go farther in?



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## UNITY PRIMARY

- A. "Sayings of Jesus." 10 cards, illuminated, 15 cents.
- B. "Kindness to Animals." 10 cards, illuminated, 15 cents.
- C. "Corner-Stones of Character." 12 tinted cards, with photo, 20 cents.
- D. "Home Life." 12 tinted cards, with photo, 25 cents.
- E. "School Life." 12 cards, illuminated, 20 cents.  
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